22nd April 1948]

Firewood control.

* 59 Q.—Sri C. N. MUTHURANGA MUDALIYAR: Will the Hon. the Minister for Food be pleased to state—

(a) why the firewood control is still being kept up in Madras;

(b) whether the Government are aware that the control price of firewood in Madras is not much below the blackmarket price; and

(c) whether the Government will take steps immediately to remove the control?

The Hon. Dr. T. S. S. RAJAN :—" (a) The Government have since issued orders for the decontrol and derationing of casuarina wood with effect from 1st May 1948 and of junglewood from 1st July 1948 in Madras City.

" (b) It is not quite clear as to what the Hon. Member means. It is, however presumed that he considers that the existing retail prices of firewood in Madras City are high and that he requires the reasons therefor. If so, the hon. Member is informed that these rates have been fixed by the Government in accordance with the policy of the Government, viz., to reduce the subsidy borne by the Government on account of firewood rationing in Madras City to the absolute minimum. It is, however, doubtful, if after decontrol, the price of firewood under conditions of free trade, would be more favourable from the point of view of the consumer.

" (c) In view of the answer for clause (a) above, this does not arise."

Thermal Station in Vizagapatam.

* 60 Q.—Sri P. VEERABHADRASWAMI: Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Works be pleased to state what improvements the Government propose to make to the existing plant in the Vizagapatam Thermal Station to meet the growing demand for electrical energy for agricultural and industrial purposes?

The Hon. Sri M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" The Government have sanctioned the Vizagapatam Power House Extension Scheme at an estimated cost of Rs. 22·91 lakhs initially rising to Rs. 27 lakhs within 5 years. This scheme provides for the addition of two 1,500 K.W. turbo alternator sets to the existing plant to meet the growing demand for electrical energy in the area for agricultural, industrial and other purposes. The two sets are expected to go into commission by the middle of 1949."

Preparation of voters' list in the Province.

* 61 Q.—Sri P. VEERABHADRASWAMI: Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(a) what arrangements the Government are making to prepare voters' lists of all adults in the Province; and

[22nd April 1948

(b) whether there is any proposal to have the preparation of the adults' lists as well as the census both at the same time to minimize expenditure?

THE HON. SRI B. GOPALA REDDI :—" (a) & (b) Instructions from the President, Constituent Assembly, are awaited."

Government bus service in the City of Madras.

* 62 Q.—SRI P. VEERABHADRASWAMI : Will the Hon. the Minister for Prohibition be pleased to state—

(a) the number of buses put on the road in the Madras City up to 1st February 1948, the cost and expenditure incurred for running them and the income; and

(b) the expenditure incurred on machinery and buildings for the workshop for motor repairs, the number of workmen, their salaries and other expenses up to 1st February 1948?

THE HON. SRI K. MADHAVA MENON (on behalf of Hon. the Minister for Prohibition) :—" The Government do not consider it desirable in the public interest to give financial figures for broken periods, with reference to the Government Transport Department. They are however prepared to place on the table of the House in due course a balance sheet of the Government Bus Service in the financial year based on the preliminary accounts up to the end of March 1948."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" May I know whether the transport services are to be the monopoly of Government or is there any idea of forming a company consisting of the Railway, the fleet-owners, the local bodies and the Government?"

THE HON. SRI K. MADHAVA MENON :—" That is the general policy, Sir, to have a company consisting of the Government, the Government of India who have taken over the Railways and the fleet-owners."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" Is it proposed, Sir, to form such a company even for the City of Madras?"

THE HON. SRI K. MADHAVA MENON :—" When the nationalization is completed buses in the City will also come under that scheme."

Supply of iron and steel for the manufacturing of agricultural implements.

* 63 Q.—SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO : Will the Hon. the Minister for Industries be pleased to state what steps are being taken by the Provincial Government to secure or provide adequate supplies of iron and steel required by factories engaged in manufacturing agricultural implements, machine tools, etc.?

THE HON. SRI H. SITARAMA REDDI :—" Iron, steel and defectives from the Provincial quota are allotted to fabricators of agricultural implements according to the needs for